

We claim:

1. A method of treating patients having chronic hepatitis C infections which comprises (1) administering a therapeutically effective induction dosing amount of ribavirin and a therapeutically effective induction dosing amount of pegylated interferon-alfa for a first treatment time period sufficient to substantially lower detectable HCV-RNA, followed by (2) administering a therapeutically effective amount of ribavirin and an therapeutically effective amount of pegylated interferon-alfa for a second treatment time period sufficient to eradicate detectable HCV-RNA at least by the end of the second treatment time period and to maintain no detectable HCV-RNA for at least 24 weeks after the end of the second treatment time period.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the amount of ribavirin administered in the first treatment time period is from about 400 to 1600 mg per day.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the amount of ribavirin administered in the first treatment time period is from about 600 to 1600 mg per day.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the pegylated interferon-alfa administered is pegylated interferon alfa-2a or pegylated interferon alfa-2b.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the amount of ribavirin administered in the second treatment time period is from about 800 to 1200 mg per day.
6. The method of claim 1 wherein the patients having chronic hepatitis C are infected with mutiple HCV genotypes including type 1.

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7. The method of claim 1 wherein the patients having chronic hepatitis C are infected with HCV genotype 2 and/or 3.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the amount of ribavirin  
5 administered in the first and second treatment time periods is from about 800 to 1200 mg per day.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the amount of ribavirin  
administered in the first and second treatment time periods is from about  
10 1000 to 1200 mg per day.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the pegylated interferon-alfa administered is a pegylated interferon alfa-2b and wherein the induction dosing amount of pegylated interferon alfa-2b administered in first  
15 treatment time period is in the range of 0.5 to 1.5 micrograms per kilogram BIW for at least four weeks, and the amount of pegylated interferon alfa-2b administered in the second treatment time period is in the range of 0.5 to 1.5 micrograms per kilogram per week on a weekly basis for up to forty-four weeks.

20 11. The method of claim 1, wherein the pegylated interferon-alfa administered is a pegylated interferon alfa-2b and wherein the induction dosing amount of pegylated interferon alfa-2b administered in first treatment time period is in the range of 0.5 to 1.5 micrograms per  
25 /kilogram BIW for four to twelve weeks, and the amount of pegylated interferon alfa-2b administered in the second treatment time period is in the range of 0.5 to 1.5 micrograms per kilogram per week on a weekly basis for thirty-six to forty-four weeks.

30 12. The method of claim 1, wherein the pegylated interferon-alfa administered is a pegylated interferon alfa-2b and wherein the induction dosing amount of pegylated interferon alfa-2b administered in first treatment time period of five weeks is in the range of 0.5 to 1.5 micrograms per kilogram BIW for one week, followed by 0.5 to 1.0 micrograms per

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kilogram BIW for four weeks, and the amount of pegylated interferon alfa-2b administered in the second treatment time period of forty-three weeks is in the range of 0.5 to 1.5 micrograms per kilogram per week on a weekly basis.

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13. The method of claim 1, wherein the pegylated interferon-alfa administered is a pegylated interferon alfa-2b and wherein, the induction dosing amount of pegylated interferon alfa-2b administered in first treatment time period is in the range of 0.5 to 1.5 micrograms/kilogram  
10 BIW for twelve weeks, and the amount of pegylated interferon alfa-2b administered in the second treatment time period is in the range of 0.5 to 1.5 micrograms/kilogram per week on a weekly basis for thirty six weeks.

14. The method of claim 1, wherein the pegylated interferon-alfa  
15 administered is a pegylated interferon alfa-2b and wherein the induction dosing amount of pegylated interferon alfa-2b administered in first treatment time period of five weeks is in the range of 0.5 to 1.5 micrograms/kilogram BIW for one week, followed by 1.0 micrograms/kilogram BIW for four weeks and the amount of pegylated  
20 interferon alfa-2b administered in the second treatment time period of forty-three weeks is in the range of 0.5 to 1.0 micrograms/kilogram per week on a weekly basis.

15. The method of claim 1, wherein the pegylated interferon-alfa  
25 administered is a pegylated interferon alfa-2b and wherein the induction dosing amount of pegylated interferon alfa-2b administered in first treatment time period is 1.5 micrograms/kilogram BIW for twelve weeks, and the amount of pegylated interferon alfa-2b administered in the second treatment time period is 1.5 micrograms/kilogram per week on a  
30 weekly basis for thirty- six weeks.

16. The method of claim 1, wherein the pegylated interferon-alfa administered is a pegylated interferon alfa-2a and the amount of pegylated interferon alfa-2a administered is from induction dosing amount

of pegylated interferon alfa-2a administered is in the range of 20 to 250 micrograms BIW for at least four weeks, and the amount of pegylated interferon alfa-2a administered in the second treatment time period is in the range of 20 to 250 micrograms per week on a weekly basis for up to  
 5 forty four weeks.

17. The method of claim 1, wherein the pegylated interferon-alfa administered is a pegylated interferon alfa-2a and wherein in first treatment time period, the induction dosing amount of pegylated  
 10 interferon alfa-2a administered is in the range of 20 to 250 micrograms BIW for four to twelve weeks, and the amount of pegylated interferon alfa-2a administered in the second treatment time period is in the range of 20 to 250 micrograms per week on a weekly basis for thirty six to forty four weeks.

18. The method of claim 1, wherein the pegylated interferon-alfa administered is a pegylated interferon alfa-2a and wherein in first treatment time period, the induction dosing amount of pegylated interferon alfa-2a administered is in the range of 20 to 250 micrograms BIW for one  
 20 week, followed by 20 to 200 micrograms BIW for four weeks, and the amount of pegylated interferon alfa-2a administered in the second treatment time period administered is in the range of 20 to 250 micrograms per week on a weekly basis for forty-three weeks.

19. The method of claim 1, wherein the pegylated interferon-alfa administered is a pegylated interferon alfa-2a and wherein in first treatment time period, the induction dosing amount of pegylated interferon alfa-2a administered is in the range of 20 to 250 micrograms BIW for twelve weeks, and the amount of pegylated interferon alfa-2a  
 30 administered in the second treatment time period is in the range of 20 to 250 micrograms per week on a weekly basis for thirty-six weeks.

20. A method of treating patients having chronic hepatitis C infections which comprises (1) administering in a first treatment time period of about

at least about four weeks, about 400-1200 mg per day of ribavirin and about 1.5 micrograms per kilogram of pegylated interferon-alfa-2b BIW, followed by (2) administering in a second treatment time period of about up to about forty-four weeks, about 800-1200 mg per day of ribavirin and about 1.0 to 1.5 kilogram per micrograms of pegylated interferon-alfa-2b once a week.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein the amount of ribavirin administered in the first treatment time period is from 600 to 1600 mg per day.

22. The method of claim 20, wherein the amount of ribavirin administered in the second treatment time period is from 1000 to 1600 mg per day.

23. The method of claim 20, wherein the the first treatment time period is four weeks and the second period is forty-four weeks.

24. The method of claim 20, wherein the induction dosing amount of pegylated interferon alfa-2b administered in second treatment time period is 1.5 micrograms/kilogram.

25. The method of claim 20, wherein the amount of ribavirin administered in the first and second treatment time periods is from about 800 to 1200 mg per day.

26. The method of claim 20 wherein the amount of ribavirin administered in the first and second treatment time period is about 1000 to 1200 mg/kg per day.

27. A method of treating patients having chronic hepatitis C infections which comprises (1) administering, in a first treatment time period week of about four weeks up to about twelve weeks, about 400-1200 mg per day of ribavirin and 1.5 micrograms per kilogram of pegylated interferon-alfa-

2b twice a week, followed by (2) administering, in a second treatment time period of about thirty-six up to about forty-four weeks, about 800-1200 mg per day of ribavirin and about 0.5 to 1.5 micrograms per kilogram of pegylated interferon-alfa-2b once a week(QW).

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28. The method of claim 27, wherein the amount of ribavirin administered in the first treatment time period is from 600 to 1600 mg per day.

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29. The method of claim 27, wherein the amount of ribavirin administered in the second treatment time period is from 1000 to 1600 mg per day.

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30. The method of claim 27, wherein the amount of ribavirin administered in the first and second treatment time periods is from about 800 to 1200 mg per day.

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31. The method of claim 27, wherein the first treatment time period is four weeks and the second period is forty-four weeks.

32. The method of claim 27 wherein the patients having chronic hepatitis C infection are naive patients having HCV genotype 1, 2 or 3.

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33. The method of claim 27, wherein the induction dosing amount of pegylated interferon alfa-2b administered in second time period is 1.5 micrograms/kilogram QW

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34. The method of claim 27, wherein the induction dosing amount of pegylated interferon alfa-2b administered in second time period is 1.0 micrograms/kilogram QW.

35. The method of claim 27, wherein the induction dosing amount of pegylated interferon alfa-2b administered in second time period is 0.5 micrograms/kilogram QW.

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